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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/053,030	06/05/2002	James J. Fleck		8700

7590 04/16/2004

Blake Bohinc
173
48 Broad St.
Red Bank, NJ 07701

EXAMINER

ZIRKER, DANIEL R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1771

DATE MAILED: 04/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

Applicant(s)

Examiner

Group Art Unit

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE -3- MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 1/28/04
- ☒ This action is **FINAL**.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 1 1; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 11 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 11 is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner
- ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).
- ☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the:
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____
- ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☐ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- ☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

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1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112:
The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. More particularly, applicant's completely rewritten former pro se application contains a great amount of new matter, particularly in paragraph No. 0012. For example, phrases such as "it will be understood that the plug material 12 can be made of any suitable material" and ". . . made from a lightweight foam material" appear to be new matter, since only Styrofoam was disclosed in the original application. Additionally, further limitations such that the plug material is "fireproof" and "is pre-molded" also appear to be new matter, as is the concluding phrase of paragraph

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0012 wherein it is stated that the backing "includes a flexible material such as paper with an adhesive backing or Mylar film". While the Examiner would like to give applicants the benefit of the doubt, it must be noted that both the application disclosure and accompanying claims have been greatly broadened from what were initially filed, and that it is improper for "new matter" to be inserted into the specification if it was not expressly or inherently present with the initial filing, as is unfortunately not believed to be the case here.

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over D'Alisa et al. Note particularly the reference's statement concerning the prior art (column 1 lines 33-45, and also column 3 lines 35-43). The reference notes that the prior art teaches that a wide variety of patches can be

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utilized to effect repairs of broken surfaces and wall ceilings and the like. The patches utilize a central portion intended to cover a hole or a crack in the wall, wherein the patch may be tapered and adhered to the wall by application of glue or the like. Additionally, the patch can be formed in any shape including circular, square, rectangular or the like. While the reference does not explicitly teach "a plug material", it is believed that such materials in conforming them to a desired hole, crack or the like is well within the skill of the art. Note also as evidence of the state of the art Hartman et al., already of record, particularly at column 3, lines 10-30 where it is taught that foams and the like may be utilized as patches together with adhesives. With respect to applicant's newly claimed method, it is believed that the method steps are clearly within the skill of the art in view of the cited sections regarding the prior art, and what other parameters that may remain, such as the utilization of plug materials which are fireproof and sizing or shaping the plugs to fit in the hole are each believed to be obvious modifications to one of ordinary skill, in the absence of unexpected results.

6. The Examiner notes that the rewritten specification lacks paragraph Nos. 006-009, and the paragraphs should accordingly be renumbered if future prosecution is contemplated.

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Additionally, the Examiner might well be receptive to a very narrow article and accompanying method claim wherein applicants claim only a Styrofoam plug having (at most) sizes available from 1/2 inch up to 6 inches, with the aforementioned new matter previously cited by the Examiner withdrawn from the specification.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See M.P.E.P. § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). The practice of automatically extending the shortened statutory period an additional month upon the filing of a timely first response to a final rejection has been discontinued by the Office. See 1021 TMOG 35.

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE TO THIS FINAL ACTION IS SET TO EXPIRE THREE MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS ACTION. IN THE EVENT A FIRST RESPONSE IS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE MAILING DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION AND THE ADVISORY ACTION IS NOT MAILED UNTIL AFTER THE END OF THE THREE-MONTH SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD, THEN THE SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD WILL EXPIRE ON THE DATE THE ADVISORY ACTION IS MAILED, AND ANY EXTENSION FEE PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) WILL BE CALCULATED FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THE ADVISORY ACTION. IN NO EVENT WILL THE

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STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE EXPIRE LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Daniel Zirker whose telephone number is (571) 272-1486. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 8:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris, can be reached on (571) 272-1478. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either private PAIR or public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Dzirker:cdc

Serial No. 10/053,030

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April 14, 2004

DANIEL ZIRKER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP ~~1900~~
1700

Daniel Zinker